

Green Your Fleet!

Biodiesel presentation: 04-Jun-2010

Manchester Transit Authority

Brief overview of MTA

- The Manchester Transit Authority provides fixed route and demand response public transportation in and around Manchester, NH. MTA also provides yellow school bus service for the Manchester School District
- The total fleet includes 105 vehicles, 95 of which have diesel engines.

MTA goes green!

- Beginning in 2008, MTA identified multiple methods for reducing our carbon footprint, one of which was switching to biodiesel for fuel.
- Economic, environmental, marketing, and maintenance benefits were all seen as positive outcomes achieved through a focus on green practices.

The funding source

- MTA identified the National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program as a potential source of funding to aid in the conversion.
- One challenge was developing a strong enough proposal that we would be successful in obtaining funds.

A collaborative approach

- MTA partnered with multiple city departments in order to increase the fleet size included in the project and achieve greater impact in the community.
- Other key departments were Highway, Water, Fire, Parks/Rec, and the Manchester School District.

Success!

- MTA submitted the project proposal in 2008 and was awarded the full funding sought in early 2009.
- Among other things, the project included funding to cover the incremental cost of B-20 biodiesel.

Biodiesel challenge

- MTA received it's first delivery of biodiesel on July 28, 2009.
- Initially, there were no significant issues as a result of the conversion. Fuel filters were needed more frequently as was expected.
- Then, it got cold.....

Gelling

- In November of 2009 MTA began having performance issues with the biodiesel gelling due to the low temperature outside.
- After multiple attempts by the distributor to remedy the problem, B-20 use was suspended in late Nov because of a need to ensure that fire equipment would work.

A return to biodiesel

- In March of 2010, MTA and the City of Manchester returned to B-20 without any further incidents.
- In researching the problems encountered during the winter of 2009, it is our belief that the distributor was the issue and not the biodiesel concept. A new distributor has been selected for the coming FY.

Would we do it again?

- ABSOLUTELY!!!!
- Despite the challenges of last winter, the overall experience of biodiesel has been very positive.
- The conversion was very simple.
- Maintenance has found the engines to be running cleaner, this is expected to result in long term cost savings.
- Very positive PR for the Authority.

What else is green at MTA?

- Delivery of our first hybrid electric vehicles expected next week.
- Begun process of going “paperless” in the admin office.
- Installation of idle reduction technology.
- Conversion to more efficient lighting at MTA in summer of 2010.
- Reduction in size of revenue vehicles to improve fuel efficiency while still meeting demand.

What else is green at MTA? (cont)

- Installation of bike racks on all revenue vehicles.
- Changed operator training classes to occur during the day rather than evening.
- AVL technology to improve DR efficiency.



Recommendations

- Biodiesel is a fantastic piece of an overall policy for going green, think of other areas where your business can make changes.
- Identify partner organizations that can take an active role in helping to leverage any funding available.
- Ensure your distributor can guarantee performance in cold weather temperatures common in New Hampshire.
- Time spent doing research up front saves much more time spent correcting problems later.